Pol. Pamphl. vol 143.

A LETTER TO LORD NORTH.

[Price 1s.]

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LETTER

TO

LORD NORTH,

ON HIS

Re-election into the Houſe of Commons.

By a MEMBER of the late PARLIAMENT.

Mihi quidem ſi hæc conditio conſulatûs data eſt, ut omnes acerbitates, omnes dolores, cruciatuſque perferrem : feram non ſolum fortiter, ſed etiam libenter, dummodo meis laboribus, vobis, populoque Romano dignitas ſaluſque pariatur. CICERO in Catilinam, Oratio IV.

LONDON:
Printed for G. WILKIE, No 71. St. Paul's Church-Yard, and R. FAULDER, in Bond-Street.
MDCCLXXX.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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A LETTER TO LORD NORTH.

MY LORD,

THIS, I believe, is the ninth time that your Lordſhip has been returned to Parliament, to ſerve your country as a Member of the Houſe of Commons. It is an event, upon which I may, with more propriety, congratulate your country than yourſelf. For you, my Lord, can have little pleaſure in the thoughts of taking your ſeat again upon the Treaſury-bench. Your ſtation there is high and conſpicuous; but it is a painful pre-eminence, to which an ambitious mind may aſpire, and by which a vain one may be gratified; but which can have no charms or allurements to a man who ſeeks an honourable retreat, and whoſe vanity (if Nature had not exempted him from that failing) muſt long ſince have been ſatiated by the poſſeſſion of almoſt every diſtinc-

tion which his country can afford. It is no eaſy taſk to paint the life of a Miniſter in the Houſe of Commons. They who ſee and know the nature of it, can find no aſſignable inducement for your continuance in ſo laborious, unprofitable, and dangerous a poſt; but that point of honour which calls on noble minds to perſevere in vindicating the rights of an injured nation, and defending the monarchy with reſolution proportioned to the dangers which ſurround it. What other motives could prevail on one born to ſucceed (though late I hope) to great hereditary titles and eſtates, once more to plunge into that ſea of troubles, to groan and ſweat under a weary life, to bear the toils and cares, the thouſand diſappointments, and the dangers which attend on greatneſs; the calumny, treachery, ingratitude of mankind; the importunity of one half, and the contumely of the other? *O conditionem miſeram, non modo adminiſtrandæ, verum etiam conſervandæ, reipublicæ!* By enumerating the labours and anxieties of a Miniſter, I wiſh not to deter your Lordſhip from that ſtation: it is not for your honour, or conſiſtent with your character, in troubleſome times, to ſeek ignoble eaſe, to ſhrink from your duty, and abandon your poſt in the day of trial. When a firm and honeſt man is ſatisfied of the juſtice of his cauſe, and the utility of his labour, the yoke ſits eaſy, and the burden light. You, my Lord, have borne the burden of a State which few other ſhoulders could

could ſo long have ſupported. For ten years you have ſtood in the gap, and have fought the battle of our laws and conſtitution. You are *miles emeritus*, and might claim your diſcharge, if your king and country did not exact your further ſervices. But the times demand your utmoſt vigour, and the exertion of all your nerves. You are not yet *ſpectatum ſatis et donatum jam rude*. You muſt not retire to the Houſe of Peers. The people ſtill wiſh to ſee the champion of their conſtitution ſtruggling for the rights of the legiſlature in the face of day; for it has been out of the power of malevolence, miſrepreſentation, or even of ill ſucceſs, to make them weary of the conſtitution, or to render you unpopular. You have borne your faculties ſo meek, have been ſo clear in your great office, that your virtues plead for themſelves. They have protected you againſt envy, hatred, and malice; they have made it diſgraceful and unfaſhionable, to avow any perſonal animoſity towards you. Nay, further, they have extorted candour from your enemies, inſomuch that, if I am accuſed of flattery, I muſt impeach them as accomplices in the guilt; I muſt give in evidence their confeſſions of your abilities and integrity; I muſt appeal to their ſpeeches in parliament, in which they have had the candour and diſcretion to acknowledge another quality in your Lordſhip, which is the reſult of the two former, moderation. That moderation and gentleneſs towards its opponents

is the characteriſtic of the preſent Government, is often admitted by its enemies; by its friends it is ſometimes ſaid to be carried to a blameable exceſs. And yet the preſent times are ſingled out as a proper period to raiſe an outcry againſt the power of the Crown; and that very lenity for which your Lordſhip is ſo juſtly extolled, is by many, who are advocates for greater rigour than I can ever approve, aſſigned as the cauſe of the preſent ſudden and ill-founded clamour.

To prevent any miſconſtruction of theſe laſt words, permit me ſhortly to explain my meaning. By a ſudden and ill-founded clamour, I mean that general vague aſſertion, that the conſtitution is in danger from the inordinate power of the Crown; an aſſertion by no means new, but laſt winter, for the firſt time, attempted to be made directly, and in terms, the ſubject of parliamentary reſolutions: Suddenly, I ſay, becauſe I believe, that, at the opening of the ſeſſions of parliament in November, few people had any conception, that the whole employment of it would be, the conſideration of the danger to which the conſtitution was liable by the increaſed and increaſing influence of the Crown. The Public was intent upon other objects. The immediate danger with which the country was threatened by the moſt powerful confederacy that ever was combined againſt it, was evil ſufficient for the day, and was likely

to

to have afforded matter enough for parliamentary eloquence: but it turned out otherwiſe, and the names of France, Spain, or America, were ſcarcely mentioned throughout the ſeſſions. A variety of cauſes, perhaps ſome uncertainty of the intentions of Government with reſpect to the continuance of the American war, and the want of any immediate public calamity to ſerve as a topic of blame, might make it appear beſt, upon the whole, to adopt domeſtic, ſpeculative, poſſible evils, as the plan of operations for the next campaign.

The plan was very well deſigned, but very ill executed both within and without the doors of Parliament.

Without doors, the plan of procuring petitions from all parts of the country, for the reduction of unneceſſary places and penſions, and the diminution of the influence of the Crown, was artfully contrived. But in order to render ſuch petitions effectual, and to provide for their being ſubſtantially carried into execution, a further meaſure was taken, which was perhaps the only thing that could have completely marred the whole ſucceſs. It was this: The parties petitioning were made to approve of concomitant reſolutions, declaratory of their intentions to take ulterior ſteps, and to provide means for the obtaining what they prayed in their petitions, in caſe the Houſe ſhould refuſe their requeſt.

requeſt. For this purpoſe, committees of correſpondence were inſtituted, which were to form an aſſociation throughout the realm; and this public demonſtration of their intentions ruined their plan, which was originally well deſigned while confined to the mere matter of petitioning. For now many moderate and well-meaning men, who moſt earneſtly wiſhed for a real reformation of whatever abuſes could be diſcovered, which might have crept into office through negligence or deſign, or which might have been occaſioned by ſome defects in the original conſtitution of offices, or by the mere lapſe of time, which might have rendered proviſions which were well adapted for the times in which they were made, wholly inapplicable to the preſent mode of carrying on public buſineſs, and incongruent with the diſpenſation of modern affairs, and the circumſtances of the age in which we live; many alſo who went further ſtill, and thought, that in the matter of influence, though no grievance exiſted, yet ſomething ſhould be done to pleaſe the people, and to blunt the edge of diſcontents, however groundleſs and unreaſonable they might be; many even of thoſe who were really uneaſy and alarmed on account of the influence of the Crown, who thought that the public had a right to expect ſome conceſſions from Adminiſtration on that head, were ſtill averſe from the notion that petitioners were to take ulterior meaſures. They did not like to hear a

language held in public meetings, aſſerting a right in petitioners to take what ſhall be refuſed them by the Parliament; they thought ſuch prayers were all too bold and peremptory; they were not ſo ſick of Parliaments, as to give their countenance to petitions accompanied with reſolutions which aſſumed an authority paramount to that to which the petitions were addreſſed, ſuperſeding the functions, and threateningthe exiſtence, of the legiſlature. No, my Lord; theſe wiſe and moderate men were neither ignorant nor careleſs of the principles of the conſtitution. They knew and profeſſed as fully, and were as ready to ſhed their blood in maintaining, the doctrine of reſiſtance to tyranny, as any committee-man or aſſociator in the kingdom. They held, that all government was eſtabliſhed for the ſake of thoſe who are governed; and that whatever form of government prevails in this or any other country, it ought not to be ſuffered any longer to exiſt, when it is converted from a ſupport and protection into an inſtrument of tyranny and oppreſſion to the people. They held, that the people, when the burden was intolerable, were not to ſink under the load, that they had a right to ſhake it off; but they neither thought that time arrived or approaching. They conſidered, that in all governments there muſt ſomewhere be lodged a ſupreme power, from whoſe deciſions no appeal could be brought but to Heaven itſelf; that they who took upon them

them ſuch an appeal, did ſo at their peril; that they, in the event, could only ſtand juſtified by ſucceſs; and that nothing ſhort of an almoſt univerſal concurrence of the whole country could ſanctify ſuch an appeal, and dignify ſuch a proceeding with the title of a revolution, which otherwiſe muſt unavoidably be deemed rebellion.

Further, my Lord, theſe real patriots held the right of the ſubject to petition the King or Parliament to be ſacred and unalienable; but they thought the Parliament intitled to the free exerciſe of its judgment, both on the contents of the petitions, and of all the circumſtances attending them. They conceived, that all people, when they preſent petitions, muſt be ſuppoſed to place confidence in thoſe to whom they preſent them. If diffidence of the juſtice of Parliament is expreſſed in the petition itſelf, it would be a deciſive reaſon againſt permitting it to be brought up; if, on the contrary, petitions are humble and decent in themſelves, but attended with circumſtances without doors which give a different complexion to the whole proceeding; if the perſons who agree upon the petition, at the very time when aſſembled for that purpoſe, come to other reſolutions, derogatory to the privileges of Parliament, menacing the contrivance of ſome means by which the Parliament ſhould be compelled to comply with

their

their requeſt; ſuch reſolutions are a contravention of the authority and competency of Parliament to refuſe their prayer; ſuch reſolutions are a denial that the Parliament is the *dernier reſort* for the redreſs of public grievances. Will any one join iſſue with me here, and ſay, that the people at large are the *dernier reſort?* No one will, I am ſure; for before the people at large can be had recourſe to, all government muſt be at an end: the whole conſtitution muſt be diſſolved, and total anarchy muſt prevail, until ſome entire new ſyſtem is framed and eſtabliſhed. And here let me do juſtice to thoſe who are for overturning our happy conſtitution, by confeſſing, that it cannot be juſtly imputed to them, that, like moſt deſtroyers of ſyſtems, they are deficient in ſubſtituting any other in its place. On the contrary, your Lordſhip has ſeen with how much aſſiduity and ſkill they have fabricated a new legiſlature. And this would bring me to all the particular meaſures which were taken out of doors for the execution of the plan of Oppoſition laſt winter; ſuch as, the reſolutions of committees at Weſtminſter, and elſewhere, concerning annual Parliaments, an hundred additional Knights of ſhires, &c. &c. But as moſt of theſe curious propoſitions were likewiſe made within the doors of Parliament, I ſhall very ſhortly endeavour to ſtate how far the plan for alarming the minds of the ſubject with apprehenſions of an overgrown power

in the Crown, was well executed, and ſucceſsful within the walls of Parliament.

The campaign was opened by preſenting the humble petitions of the people of England, as they were called; and that was done with great decency and caution, leſt it ſhould be apprehended, that there was any intention of threatening the legiſlature, which was always diſavowed. Accordingly the Houſe was aſſured, that the petitioners aſſembled on this occaſion to obtain redreſs from Parliament peaceably, and not armed with guns, ſwords, ſtaves, &c.; but that *

Theſe humble petitions being *thus* preſented, the next manœuvre was the bringing in of the famous Civil Eſtabliſhment Bill. This was introduced by a ſpeech, the ingenuity and eloquence of which would have been miraculous, had it come from any other perſon. It was received with the univerſal admiration of the Houſe; but met with no other comment on that day, but the very marked encomiums which your Lordſhip beſtowed on the arrangement of its matter, and the great eloquence with which it was delivered. When the bill was brought up and inſpected, it was found to contain ſuch a variety of matter of ſuch a very diſtinct and heterogeneous nature, that your Lordſhip, and

almoſt

almoſt the whole Houſe, were for reading the bill a firſt time, thinking that it was not debateable upon any one general principle, but that it contained a great number of principles, almoſt as many as it had clauſes. I own I thought the objectionable matter preponderated ſo ſtrongly, that there could be no impropriety in rejecting the whole. I thought the proviſions of the bill little adapted to the prayers of the petitions; and the relief propoſed ſo diſſimilar to the requeſt, that I could not underſtand how it could be contended, that the petitions and the bill accorded, even as far as general terms can expreſs the object of particular arrangements; beſides, that it appeared to me to be altogether too great and ſudden an alteration in the ſyſtem of our government, even ſuppoſing every part of it to be in itſelf adviſeable. Without being an enemy to reformation, any one might think it rather an unſafe experiment to aboliſh half the offices in the realm, to ſweep away at once whole Boards, the Board of Trade, the Board of Ordnance, the Board of Works, the Board of Green Cloth, the Wardrobe, the Jewel Office, even ſome of the King's Guards and Attendants on his Perſon, the Houſehold, the Mint, the Exchequer; all theſe, and other departments, were either to be deſtroyed or new modelled in one act of Parliament. But that was only a ſmall part of the plan which was intended; for, excluſive of what was me-

ditated for another year, relative to the Cuſtoms, the Army, the Elections, leave was given to bring in a bill or bills in the ſame ſeſſions, for aboliſhing and alienating great Principalities, with their whole ſyſtem of revenue and juriſdiction; the Principality of Wales, the Palatinate of Cheſter, the Duchy of Cornwall, the Duchy of Lancaſter, the Demeſne-lands of the Crown, and all the Foreſts.

Ter ſunt conati imponere Pelio Oſſam,
Scilicet atque Oſſæ frondoſum involvere Olympum.

All theſe enormous propoſitions, I ſay, were to be heaped in one pile; this *rudis indigeſtaque moles*, like the mountains in chaos of old; and by theſe gigantic ſteps the aſſociated Oppoſition, *conjurati cœlum reſcindere fratres*, were to climb up to power; and your Lordſhip was to lie, together with the conſtitution, overwhelmed, and buried under the ruins.

It is not my intention to diſcuſs the merits of all the propoſitions in this multifarious bill, or even to relate the ſucceſs and failure of its different clauſes. The conteſt was long and ſtubborn; every inch of ground was diſputed; the numbers were nearly equal; and, in two pitched battles on the two firſt clauſes, the victory was alternate. But when theſe oppoſite forces had tried their ſtrength on ſeveral grounds,

grounds, it was perceived by ſome of the ableſt Generals, that in their intended courſe it would be neceſſary to ſit down before a very ſtrong fortreſs, which they feared was impregnable. This was no leſs than the King's Houſe. They foreſaw the difficulty they ſhould have in reducing the citadel; they knew that it was ſtrongly garriſoned, not only by houſehold troops, but that the country flocked in to its defence. Their fears proved well founded, and the repulſe they met with threw them into utter confuſion; they began now to deſpair. This diſcomfiture caſt an ominous conjecture on the whole ſucceſs; but it was a deciſive overthrow of the particular plan of operations chalked out by this Civil Eſtabliſhment Bill.

Accordingly another ſcheme was delineated. Another great General acting in chief, who had a ſeparate command in what was *then the allied army*, commenced a different ſyſtem of hoſtilities. Seeing the ill conſequences of coming immediately to action on ground marked out and agreed upon, or of laying ſiege to any particular place, he began his operations at a diſtance, by collecting force, and laying in ſtores on all ſides, which might enable him to reduce whatever part of the country he ſhould afterwards pleaſe to fall upon; and here (as I ſaid before) the plan was well deſigned, but it was ill executed.

It was ſurely well judged, finding one ſyſtem impracticable, to quit it, and to begin another *ab ovo*, to wipe away all former ill-conceived abortive productions, and to regenerate the whole. It required all the ſkill of party to diſengage itſelf from this bill, to rid itſelf of this incumbrance, which entangled and retarded its progreſs, to ſhake off its ſkin like a ſerpent. Accordingly, *poſitis novus exuviis nitiduſque juventâ*, Oppoſition ſet to work with freſh vigour and venom, and brought forth a famous and wonderful parliamentary prodigy. It was an abſtract reſolution of a general nature, which might afterwards be brought to ſupport whatever individual meaſure ſhould be built upon it, "*That the influence of the* "*Crown has increaſed, is increaſing, and ought* "*to be diminiſhed.*" A very well contrived, artful, comprehenſive motion, which might be argued to extend to any caſe, and was peculiarly well calculated to captivate many very reſpectable country gentlemen, who by education had imbibed, and who by deſcent were intitled to, an hereditary prejudice againſt the influence of the Crown, though they were profeſſed friends to its prerogatives. The diſcuſſion of the merits of that reſolution lies not within the compaſs of this Letter, or of my abilities; and whatever my opinion may be of the truth of the aſſertion itſelf, or of the expediency of coming to ſuch a reſolution if

true,

true, I ſhall content myſelf with ſimply ſtating the nature of the queſtion.

And though I attempt no more, I know what a difficult taſk I undertake. The ſubject is of ſo delicate a kind, that it is eaſy to miſrepreſent whatever is ſaid upon it. I muſt therefore premiſe, that I am not going to write in defence of parliamentary proſtitution—

> Ne forte rearis,
> Impia me rationis inire elementa viamque
> Introgredi ſceleris—

leſt you ſhould think me capable of ſuch blaſphemy againſt the conſtitution. I am no advocate for a ſlaviſh and mercenary Houſe of Commons; but I am ready to profeſs myſelf a friend to royal influence in the State. The ideas are perfectly diſtinct and ſeparate; ſo much ſo, that when influence and corruption are confounded one with another, and uſed as ſynonimous expreſſions, I cannot give credit to mankind for ſuch a degree of ſtupidity, as to believe them unable, and therefore muſt ſuppoſe them unwilling, to diſcern the difference. Very ſlender faculties are ſufficient to diſtinguiſh between an abſolute reſignation of all conſcience and judgment into the hands of a Miniſter, and an attachment to the cauſe of Government; between clandeſtine bribery, and the public acceptance of beneficial employments. That

influence,

influence, to a certain degree, and under proper limitations, ought to exiſt, is admitted fairly by thoſe who are now for its diminution; in all their ſpeeches they uniformly ſtate, that the Crown has *too much* influence. Their arguments all go to ſhew an approbation of it, if kept within proper bounds; they are ready to recogniſe and juſtify it as a principle of Whiggiſm. Even Mr. Hume, who has ſometimes been ſuppoſed to be no great favourer of thoſe principles, has directly oppoſed and anſwered the poſition in Lord Bolingbroke's Diſſertation on Parties, "That the dependence of "Parliament, in *every degree*, is an infringe-"ment of Britiſh liberty." Mr. Hume thinks, that it would have been more prudent in the management of the argument, for the country party of that time to have made ſome conceſſions, and have only examined what was the proper degree of this dependence, beyond which it became dangerous to liberty. He argues the neceſſity of influence, from the danger which would ariſe to our conſtitution from the exceſs of power entruſted to the Houſe of Commons. His opinion is, that, in a mixed Government, where the authority is ſo diſtributed, that one rank, whenever it pleaſed, might ſwallow up all the reſt, and engroſs the whole power, the natural ambition of mankind would induce that order of men, of whom this rank is compoſed, to uſurp on every other order, and render itſelf abſolute and uncon-

troulable; that the ſhare of power allotted to the Houſe of Commons is ſo great, that it might wreſt from the Crown every power which the conſtitution has given it, one after another; and that the only reaſon why the Houſe of Commons does not ſtretch its power is, becauſe ſuch an uſurpation would be contrary to the intereſt of the majority of its members. The intereſt of the body is reſtrained by the intereſt of individuals; and, therefore, Mr. Hume thinks, that ſome degree of influence is inſeparable from our mixed government, and neceſſary for its preſervation.

It is exceedingly difficult, not only to aſcertain the degree which ought to exiſt, and fix the proper medium, but alſo to find words to deſcribe the nature of influence preciſely, though it is very eaſy to diſtinguiſh it from corruption. It ariſes from the patronage which neceſſarily reſides in the Crown, which cannot be taken from it without aboliſhing the functions of a ſupreme executive magiſtrate, and deſtroying the office of King. The diſpoſal of public offices is moſt conveniently placed in the Crown. If they were elective, great confuſion and diſorder in the country, and great delay of all public buſineſs, would be the conſequence; innumerable evils would attend any other mode of appointing them, than that which our laws have preſcribed; and above all, it would be impoſſible for the executive department of Government to be carried on by a Monarch, who was not at liberty to chuſe in

whom he would place his confidence. From hence it comes, that the Crown is poſſeſſed of ſuch a patronage. It was not originally given for the purpoſe of creating an influence in the legiſlature; but that influence was an unavoidable, and, as we have ſeen, a beneficial conſequence of it. In ſtrict theory, it is ſaid by ſome, that the Legiſlature ſhould be ſubject neither to fears nor hopes; that each individual ſhould vote, not only according to the dictates of his own conſcience (which no one can diſpute), but according to an opinion which he ſhall be bound to form on each queſtion, however ſuddenly that queſtion may be propounded, however incompetent he may feel to give any judgment on the ſubject, and without any deference to the abilities, experience, information, or official ſituation of others. Will any honeſt man ſay, that this theory, in all its rigour, can, or ought to be carried into practice? If I were to argue on a ſuppoſition of perfection in mankind, I ſhould ſay, that no government at all is neceſſary; we ſhould neither ſtand in need of a King, a Parliament, or any Laws. But can any one be ſo ignorant, as to think abſolute purity attainable in the diſpenſation of any human inſtitution; as not to know, that there are inherent in the mind, paſſions, prejudices, and motives of conduct, which ought ever to be counteracted? If it were only the envy of the world, and that propenſity which we ſee in men to reſiſt thoſe who are put in authority over them, we ſhould find it very neceſſary to put ſome weight

in the oppoſite ſcale. No man who has ſtudied mankind, or attended to the nature of government, can honeſtly ſay, that he thinks our conſtitution a practicable ſyſtem, without any mixture of influence; and whatever invidious appellations we give it, or in however odious a light it may be repreſented, as depriving the people of their ſhare in the Government, and defeating the purpoſe of repreſentation; however plauſibly it may be ſtated to the illiterate as a ſoleciſm in Government; yet all men of learning or good ſenſe ſee and confeſs its utility, and know, that in many States, whoſe conſtitutions have been leſs complicated than ours, and even in our own country, inſtances are to be found of much more ſtriking ſoleciſms. Mr. Hume, in one of his Eſſays, has commented very ingeniouſly on three remarkable ſoleciſms. The γραφη παρανομων at Athens:—The claſhing of the *comitia centuriata* and the *comitia tributa* at Rome:—And the legality of preſſing ſeamen in England. But though in all mixed Governments, there will be ſtrange contrarieties and ſeeming inconſiſtencies, blended and interwoven in the original frame of their conſtitution; though their theories are intricate and perplexed; yet in practice, mixed Governments are often ſimple, plain, and manageable. This is, in ſome meaſure, the caſe with our Government, in reſpect to influence. Though it may ſeem, at firſt, to any one unaccuſtomed to think on ſuch ſubjects,

to be incompatible with liberty, and tending to undermine the conſtitution; yet it has been found, that the conſtitution contains within it correctives of its own abuſes, preſervatives againſt the encroachments of its ſeveral parts upon each others privileges, as well as upon the liberties of the whole community. So long as the fountains of freedom flow in undiminiſhed ſtreams, and in their uſual channels, and whilſt the ſoil is wholeſome, the ſeeds of liberty will vegetate. The conſtitution, in ſpite of the partial corruption of individuals, will itſelf be unpolluted and incorruptible ——

> The etherial mold
> Incapable of ſtain will ſoon expel
> Her miſchief.

The life-ſprings of the State ariſe from the body of the people of England. While that great maſs of blood is wholeſome and unbroken, it will always have elaſtic ſtrength enough to throw off any particles of corruption which time may have collected. This very year has brought forth into action thoſe principles of renovation which preſerve our conſtitution. At this criſis, it may purge itſelf both of venality and faction. I truſt, that neither the aphoriſm of Lord Bacon, nor the prophecy of Monteſquieu, will be verified, by the corruption of Parliament, during your Lordſhip's adminiſtration. You are no advocate for corruption; though you, and all

all others who oppoſed the reſolution, That the influence of the Crown ought to be diminiſhed, are held out as ſuch to the people.

But whoever conſiders the magnitude, extent, and intricacy, of that reſolution, will not be much ſurpriſed, that your Lordſhip, and ſo large a number of Members, ſhould refuſe to concur, at once, in ſuch a propoſition, without any previous notice. It is not only uſual to give ſome intimation of the nature of every important motion intended to be made in Parliament, but it is demandable in candour; and it is of public utility, that the Members ſhould have an opportunity of conſidering the merits of a great queſtion before they decide upon it. Perhaps, I may be allowed to ſuppoſe (without derogating from the abilities of thoſe who repreſent the Commons of Great Britain), that it would be convenient to gentlemen, to have ſome little time to qualify themſelves to be judges in ſo complicated a matter. May I, without being guilty of contumely, expreſs a doubt, how far every ſenator, who was called upon ſo ſuddenly to vote, that the balance of power in the three conſtituent parts of the Legiſlature was deſtroyed, and that the Crown preponderated in the ſcale, was a perfect maſter of the circumſtances neceſſary to be known, in order to form any competent opinion on ſuch a queſtion? That it is a ſubject of great detail, cannot be doubted; it branches into every department of the State; it concerns

every

every deſcription and order of men; it cannot be comprehended in one view. Objects, when they exceed certain dimenſions, cannot, by the laws of optics, be ſeen at one ſight; ſo again, when they are divided into a multitude of very minute particles, they cannot be obſerved but through a microſcope, and require much time and trouble for an accurate examination. Both theſe caſes apply to this queſtion upon the encreaſe of influence; in one light, it is too great, in another, it is too minute, to be the ſubject of one vote; its magnitude makes it an improper object of an immediate primary determination, to ſerve as a *ſubſtratum* for eſſential innovations in the State; and its minute detail, in reſpect to the variety of conſiderations which it includes, renders it unfit to be compreſſed into a ſingle vote, and to be reſolved upon, and reported to the Houſe, the ſame night. Such a motion would more naturally have been expected as the reſult of many other concluſions, formed in the courſe of a long enquiry, and eſtabliſhed by a previous ſtatement of facts, in a committee appointed for that purpoſe. It is much eaſier to aſſert and ſay, that the fact is too notorious to be diſputed, and that every one is a daily witneſs to the exceſſive influence of the Crown, than to ſtate with any degree of candour, intelligence, and preciſion, how far the increaſe of influence from any given period (for inſtance, from the Revolution), ariſing from the augmentation of our fleets and armies, and of our national debt, is

greater

greater or leſs, than the defalcation of it by various means and circumſtances; ſome of them imputable to accident, as flowing from unforeſeen political events, and the changes incidental to the progreſs of time; and ſome the effect of deſign, reſulting from the deliberate intention of the Legiſlature, and preſcribed by poſitive inſtitution. Of this latter ſort, are all thoſe ſtatutory proviſions for the diminution of influence. Acts of Parliament, creating diſabilities in certain officers of the Crown to ſit in the Houſe of Commons. By theſe acts, all perſons holding offices created ſince 1705, are diſabled; ſo that the Crown cannot appoint any new office in future, tenable with a ſeat in the Houſe of Commons. Beſides which, the ſtatutes on this head are made to operate with a retroſpect; and all officers (except the Commiſſioners of the Treaſury) concerned in the management of any duties created ſince 1692, are rendered incapable of ſitting in the Houſe. A long train of other offices are alſo diſabled by name; ſuch as, all Commiſſioners of Prizes, Tranſports, Sick and Wounded, Wine Licences, Navy and Victualling, Secretaries, or Receivers of Prizes, Comptrollers of the Army Accounts, Agents for Regiments, Governors of Plantations, and their Deputies, Officers of Minorca or Gibraltar, Officers of Exciſe or Cuſtoms, Clerks or Deputies in the Offices of the Treaſury, Exchequer, Navy, Victualling, Admiralty, Pay of Army or Navy,

Secretaries

Secretaries of State, Salt, Stamps, Appeals, Wine Licences, Hackney Coaches, Hawkers and Pedlars. Under this head of diſability by ſtatute, likewiſe come all perſons who have any penſion from the Crown during pleaſure, or for any number of years. Beſides theſe diſabling acts, it is to be obſerved, that the Legiſlature has enacted, that ſo often as any member ſhall accept an office under the Crown (excepting in the army or navy), it ſhall vacate his ſeat in Parliament, though it is not one of thoſe offices which diſqualify him to be re-elected. Other acts have paſſed to leſſen the influence of the Crown in elections; ſuch as the reſtraining certain revenue officers from interfering in elections, under great penalties; ſuch as Mr. Grenville's bill, regulating the mode of deciding controverted elections. The Legiſlature has alſo framed proviſions for ſecuring the independence of the elected, by requiring a qualification to be produced by each member, who muſt, before he takes his ſeat, ſwear, that he is in poſſeſſion of landed property to a certain amount. Many ſtatutes have been enacted, by which the patronage of the Crown is diminiſhed. Without enumerating them, I will only mention, that his preſent Majeſty, on his acceſſion, gave up to the public all the Crown lands, which was a very fruitful ſource of influence. And to conclude this very imperfect catalogue of parliamentary defalcations of influence, I muſt obſerve, that the whole patronage

tronage of the Crown, whether in the ſhape of place or penſion, is by taxes reduced in value more than one fourth part of the neat income. But, excluſive of the means taken by the legiſlature to guard itſelf againſt influence by laws of its own making, circumſtances have happened in the courſe of time, which muſt contribute greatly to the declenſion of Royal power. The diminution of the value of money ſince the Revolution, muſt make all fixed ſalaries of much leſs value to the holders of them, and much leſs deſirable, than in former times. The ſalaries of office were formerly ſufficient to ſupport the officer; but they remain the ſame, and have not, like landed and commercial property, increaſed in proportion to the increaſe of taxes and luxury. But there remains one conſideration, which, from the magnitude and importance of it, as well as from its novelty, and the diſtreſs which it brings upon us, muſt be uppermoſt in our thoughts,—the loſs of America for the preſent. This is ſurely ſuch a defalcation of Royal patronage, as reduces it much below the ſtandard of times when it was not ſo much complained of.

But whether all or any of theſe conſiderations were in the mind of each member who voted on the ſubject, or whether they were weighed ſufficiently; whether the riſe and progreſs of influence was hiſtorically traced, its proper degree and quantity aſcertained and

meaſured, and its different kinds diſcriminated, is not for me to ſay. I am not to ſuppoſe, that a committee of the whole Houſe could come to any raſh, precipitate reſolution; I am not to ſuppoſe, that a Houſe of Commons could be faſcinated by a mere ſound, fit only to catch the ears of the multitude: but I may and do conceive, that, upon the ſudden propounding of an abſtract queſtion, affecting, on the one hand, the power of the Crown in reſpect to its influence, and, on the other hand, ſeeming to promote the independence of the Commons, many reſpectable gentlemen, who had not very critically examined the truth of the aſſertion, might think it more prudent, and more conſonant to the ſentiments and feelings of a free people, unto whom they were likely ſoon to return, diveſted of their ſenatorial capacity, to take that ſide which profeſſed apprehenſions for the cauſe of general liberty. This they might think the ſafeſt ſide, when driven to a vote on ſuch a delicate topic. I may however differ from them in thinking it the ſafeſt ſide, I mean for the conſtitution; I may, without any diſreſpect to them, be of opinion, that a declaration againſt the Crown, in theſe times, will not conduce either to the ſafety or the freedom of the country. Further, I may think that the Crown ſtands in need of ſupport; and that if its influence had increaſed, the licentiouſneſs of the age had more than kept pace with it; that ſuch was

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the abuſe of liberty, to ſuch wanton extremities, and with ſuch rapid ſtrides, had it advanced, that it had far exceeded any progreſs that influence could have made; that levelling principles, that diſrepect of all rank, authority, and law, had outbalanced, and been more than an equal ſet off againſt, any invaſions of Royal power that could be pretended to exiſt.

But, my Lord, theſe invaſions were not pretended, even by your enemies, to have been made during your adminiſtration; on the contrary, they were admitted to have been the work of many ſucceſſive reigns; at leaſt, this confeſſion was frequently made in Parliament, though I cannot ſay there was the ſame candour without doors, in ſtating this matter to the people. In all the appeals to the people, by public prints and at public meetings, the influence of the Crown was complained of as a ſhameful abuſe of the preſent government, without any acknowledgement, that it was gradually accumulated, and of long ſtanding, the unavoidable conſequence of ſyſtems eſtabliſhed and approved by thoſe whom the preſent complainers profeſſed to idoliſe; that if it was grown to a dangerous ſize, it ſtill was the offſpring of free parents, was foſtered, nouriſhed, and brought up in the Houſe of Liberty, was coeval, and had gone hand in hand, with many of the faireſt children of Freedom in

the moſt flouriſhing and proſperous days of the community. No, my Lord; it was every where repreſented as an hideous monſter, ſpringing out on a ſudden from a rank and unwholeſome ſoil, engendered by the noxious vapours of a peſtilential climate: it was called an Hydra, and Hercules was not ſparing in his blows. We have already related the iſſue of that battle; and we have ſeen, that the people, though no induſtry was wanting to raiſe their fears, and work on their imaginations, did not think that this Hydra could afford the loſs of ſo many heads without complete deſtruction. They wiſhed not totally to annihilate the creature; they wiſhed to ſcotch the ſnake, not kill it; they remembered the ſtory of Cadmus, and feared that, if the ſerpent was ſlain, there might ariſe from its teeth men clad in armour, who might, as they did, fight with one another, till almoſt all were killed. *Cadmeia victoria* was a proverb which they had not forgotten; and they deſpaired of begetting peace and harmony by the demolition of Royal influence in the State. They knew that the Crown, by the conſtitution, was made the fountain of juſtice and mercy, of office and of honours; that rewards and puniſhments muſt proceed from the higheſt powers; that, in a free State, gratifications are better inſtruments of government than priſons or ſcaffolds; and that the cauſe of Liberty was intereſted, in not ſuffering the Crown to be totally de-

prived of the means of rewarding thoſe who ſhewed themſelves friends to our free and happy conſtitution.

At the ſame time, there was a majority of thoſe, who were ſo far from being controuled by the miniſters of the Crown, that they voted, that influence had exceeded its proper bounds, and that ſome reduction of it would be ſalutary. This vote was carried againſt your Lordſhip. The ſucceſs of the propoſition diſproved the truth of it, and the reſolution of the Houſe was *felo de ſe*. But notwithſtanding the paradoxical nature of the aſſertion in this vote, it was matter of no ſmall triumph to Oppoſition. Let us therefore now ſee how the conductors of Oppoſition availed themſelves of the advantageous ground which they had obtained.

They were now maſters of the field, with a majority pledged to ſupport any meaſure, for the reduction of influence, which was within the bounds of reaſon, and not productive of greater evils than thoſe which it was intended to remedy. But inſtead of following up their reſolution with ſome ſpecific propoſal on that head, which flowed as a conſequence from their firſt propoſition; inſtead of aiming their next blow at the influence of the Crown, they at once abandoned the ground on which they were triumphant, in order to make an attack on another object, totally different in its

its nature, namely, the prerogative of the Crown.

A motion was made, to *addreſs the Crown not to diſſolve the Parliament, or prorogue the preſent ſeſſion, until proper meaſures had been taken to diminiſh the influence, and correct the other abuſes, complained of by the petitions of the people.*

This was entering into a new field of battle, in which they had no right to preſume a ſuperiority in ſituation or number. No complaints had been made by the people, no diſſatisfaction had been expreſſed by Parliament on account of prerogative; on the contrary, it was ſaid to be already ſufficiently curtailed, to have been ſunk almoſt into diſuſe and oblivion. We had been accuſtomed to read in one of the moſt eloquent compoſitions of modern times (in which influence alſo was not ſo roughly handled as it has lately been), intitled, *Thoughts on the Cauſe of the preſent Diſcontents*, That "the power of the Crown was al-"moſt dead and rotten as prerogative, which "being only the offspring of antiquated pre-"judices, had moulded, in its original *ſta-"mina*, irreſiſtible principles of decay and diſ-"ſolution." But though prerogative has, in this Author's opinion, long ſince been dead and buried, will he ſuffer it to reſt in peace? Has he not diſturbed its *manes?* Is not its

ghoſt

ghoſt called up to ſtalk abroad, and ſhake our diſpoſitions; or rather, like Banquo, to puſh us from our ſtools? The Parliament, however, were not appalled by ſuch unreal mockery. They dreaded not in theſe days the exertions of prerogative, and refuſed to intermeddle with what they knew to be the proper province of the executive department. This was the *coup de grace* to Oppoſition, which they called for of their own accord.

I ſhall not miſ-ſpend my time in proving, that the lawful prerogative of the Crown was attacked by this motion. For although the competency of the Crown to diſſolve the Parliament was not denied, but rather recogniſed, by this motion; yet it is too clear to ſtand in need of any argument, that any interference of the Houſe in the matter of its own diſſolution, carries ſo much authority with it, that its advice or recommendation amounts in effect to little leſs than an aſſumption of that prerogative. This, I preſume, has been at all times the opinion of the Houſe of Commons; as I am not informed of any one inſtance in the hiſtory of England, till the laſt ſeſſions, of its having been propoſed in the Houſe to addreſs the Crown not to diſſolve the Parliament, though, for purpoſes of convenience, addreſſes have been preſented againſt prorogations. If I were to go into any diſcuſſion of the queſtion, Whether prerogative has, or has not, been aimed at? I

ſhould

ſhould be forced to recur to the Civil Eſtabliſhment Bill, and ſay, that notwithſtanding all the diſavowals of any intention to affect prerogative, the attempt was certainly made; for to diſable the King from appointing officers, of the utility of whoſe functions he is by law the ſole judge, is plainly and flatly to cut off that prerogative. If their ſalaries or emoluments are burdenſome to the country, the people have a right to petition for their reduction; but the Crown may, if it pleaſes, diminiſh the profits of its officers without leſſening their numbers; indeed, I have not heard it contended, that the bill was not in that reſpect reſcindatory of the prerogative.

I ſhould be aſhamed to ſay ſo much upon ſubjects ſo exhauſted, if I did not ſee ſo many inſtances of the ſtupidity, ignorance, or perverſeneſs of mankind, in not diſtinguiſhing between prerogative and influence. The *power* of the Crown is a more general term; it may allude to either, and comprehends them both. Accordingly, the ſyſtem of ſome has been, to perplex the underſtandings of the people, by bringing every poſſible queſtion under that head. This ſplendid topic is hung out to dazzle their minds. At the ſound of thoſe words, the *power of the Crown*, all argument muſt ceaſe; all offices muſt ſink to the ground; the moſt ancient eſtabliſhments muſt bow down their heads; and the pillars of the conſtitution

muſt

muſt fall, like the walls of Jericho, at the ſound of the trumpet. Such was the magical virtue of this vague indefinite catch-word, that it perverted the faculties of men ſo far, that they knew not the meaning of the terms they uſed; not only prerogative and influence were confounded, but errors in the execution of offices were blended with queſtions on the propriety of their exiſtence. The correction of abuſes and deviations from our conſtitution were mixed, and made a common cauſe, with the condemnation of the conſtitution itſelf, and the total alteration of it: whereas nothing can be ſo contradictory, as the idea of reforming and correcting a conſtitution which is meant to be entirely done away. Such mending and patching would be as prepoſterous, as to attempt to cure a wound in a limb which was deſtined for amputation.

And here, my Lord, I am ſorry to ſay, that there are thoſe who think the wounds ſo deep and incurable, that great integral parts of our conſtitution muſt be lopped off. To thoſe gentlemen I muſt preſume to ſay, that *cuncta prius tentanda*. Inſignificant as I am, I muſt take the liberty to recommend a little caution to thoſe advocates for indiſcriminate reformation, who are pulling an old houſe over their heads, and, in the midſt of the ruins, are madly cutting away the beams and timbers

which they ſtand upon; for when monarchy is pared away, ariſtocracy will not ſucceed it. All ranks and diſtinctions will fall to the ground; and that influence, which, by the preſent conſtitution, is inſeparable from great rank and property, will get into the hands of enterpriſing men, whoſe names are not yet known. The troubles in the laſt century, and the late rebellion in America, furniſh too many examples of this kind. Therefore I muſt once more ſupplicate our modern reformers to leave influence enough in the Crown and the Gentry, to enable them to tranſmit the conſtitution inviolate to their poſterity. The Author of *Thoughts on the Cauſes of the preſent Diſcontents*, tells us, that "our conſtitution ſtands on a nice "equipoiſe, with ſteep precipices and deep "waters on all ſides of it. In removing it "from a dangerous leaning towards one ſide, "there may be a riſque of overſetting it on "the other; every project of a material "change in a government ſo complicated as "ours, combined at the ſame time with ex-"ternal circumſtances ſtill more complicated, "is a matter full of difficulties. They do "not reſpect the public or themſelves, who "engage for more than they are ſure they "ought to attempt, or that they are able to "perform." Let us then ſee what has been attempted.

I will

I will endeavour only to enumerate the projects which have been deviſed, excluſive of the long liſt which I mentioned before. *Nunc jam apertè rempublicam univerſam petis.* Annual Parlialiaments, adding an hundred Knights of ſhires, the disfranchiſement of Boroughs, taking away the votes of Revenue-Officers, Triennial Paliaments, and (leſt ſhort Parliaments ſhould fall into the hands of the Crown by the King's appointing the Returning Officer) taking away the King's nomination of Sheriffs (by whom almoſt the whole of our municipal law is executed), giving to every man in England a right to vote for Members of Parliament, diſabling all perſons who contract with Government to ſupply the public with neceſſaries of any ſort, from ſitting in Parliament, increaſing the qualifications of Members, beſides hints of attempting to deprive the Scotch Lords and the Biſhops of their votes in the Houſe of Peers. This was the bill of fare; but the ſuperfluity was nauſeous, and turned the ſtomach of the nation. They foreſaw the impoſſibility of digeſting ſo much crude traſh, and ſickened at the ſight of the feaſt.

To this it is that we owe the preſervation of our Government; to this it is that Oppoſition owe their unpopularity. *Nunc te patria, quæ communis eſt omnium noſtrûm parens, odit ac metuit: et jam diu de te nihil judicat, niſi de parricidio ſuo cogitare.* The eyes of all the people were opened; they now no longer looked upon every

one as a friend to corruption, and an enemy to liberty, who did not implicitly adopt every wanton, fantaſtical alteration of the conſtitution, which extravagant folly and preſumption could ſuggeſt to the prurient imaginations of every conceited and officious reformer. Hitherto, all patriotiſm had been ſuppoſed to conſiſt in a luſt of innovation; to new model, and to ameliorate, were thought ſynonymous terms; every new project was argued to be a corollary from the reſolution againſt influence, which was made a receptacle for all the rubbiſh and offal and undigeſted crudities of the town; every idle, ſtraggling, unconnected, unconcerted propoſition, which was thrown, to take its chance, into the ſtream of popularity, was ſucked up into the vortex of that famous and all-devouring reſolution. But now the meaſure overflowed, the appetite of the nation was palled, the thirſt of change and novelty was quenched; moderate men began to look with a more favourable eye on the old eſtabliſhed Government; they ſaw the conſiſtency, and nice dependencies of its parts; they were afraid to meddle with it, for fear of deſtroying the harmony of ſo complicated a machine; every day convinced them more and more, that a wild unbridled ſpirit of innovation was gone forth, which would drive hard to the ruin of this country, blaſt all its hopes of better days, weaken, confound, and baffle its efforts againſt its foreign enemies, and perhaps diſturb the ſources of its domeſtic tranquillity. They ſaw with indignation, a

ſettled

ſettled plan, to pull down the Parliament and the Monarchy. His Majeſty was only to retain the name; and all the addition to a King, the ſway, revenue, execution, was to be placed elſewhere; the Aſſociators held preciſely the lauguage of Goneril to Lear:

——Be then deſired by her,
Who elſe will take the thing ſhe begs
Of fifty to diſquantity your train.

But the country gentlemen did not reliſh ſuch ungrateful language to the Throne; they did not like to cut off the train, and ſcant the ſizes of a Monarch, who had made a voluntary ſurrender of his hereditary revenue, on his acceſſion, for an inadequate annuity. As little did they approve of that indecent and diſorderly language, by which the Parliament was to be cried down; that it had betrayed its truſt; that it was become corrupt. They ſaw no patriotiſm in attempting to depreciate the legiſlature, at a moment of public difficulty and diſtreſs; and they acted on this principle, that the queſtion was now no longer, Whether we ſhould adopt one innovation or another? but, Whether we ſhould, at once, lay aſide, and blot out from our memory, all trivial fond records of our ancient conſtitution? Not whether there ſhould be a change of men and meaſures, but a change of all that we have been brought up to venerate from our childhood; a change of that conſtitution which has ſo long been the envy, admira-

tion,

ſion, and common theme of declamation, throughout Europe; that happieſt compound of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, which human wit and the experience of ages have produced!

Having profeſſed myſelf ſo zealous a friend to the conſtitution as it now ſtands, permit me to extend thoſe profeſſions to the Church as well as to the State. Though civil diſſentions are dreadful, religious differences are ſtill more to be avoided and abhorred. Religion is a plant, which, where it grows at all, is deeply rooted in the hearts of men. It brings forth the moſt ſalutary, or the bittereſt fruits, according to the ſoil and climate from whence it ſprings, and the branches which are grafted upon it; it brings with it airs from heaven, or blaſts from hell, according to the purity or corruption of its ſpirit. The mild, benign, and charitable principles of our reformed Church are, when conſidered in a temporal view (excluſive of their ſpiritual excellence), the greateſt bleſſing which we can enjoy; they not only conduce more effectually to the extirpation of the more enormous and the groſſer vices, by expoſing their deformity, and rendering immorality odious in the ſight of man; but, by a more gentle and gradual operation on the ſecret ſprings of the mind, they ameliorate our diſpoſitions, humaniſe our hearts, mitigate our paſſions, ſoften our manners, incline us to pardon, pity, and

correct the errors of others. By making us ſenſible of our own infirmities, they teach us even to forgive the unjuſt and cruel acts of our enemies, much more to tolerate the opinions of our friends and countrymen. This benevolent ſpirit of our Church had lately broke forth in freſh inſtances of toleration. Our liberal and enlightened age had paſſed an act, ſeemingly with univerſal approbation, to remove the diſgraceful ſeverity and injuſtice of ſome laws againſt the Roman Catholics.

But, to the aſtoniſhment of the world, it was found, that even in theſe days, and in this country, there were wretches, whoſe blind infatuated bigotry made them proper inſtruments to execute the deſperate deſigns of treaſon and fanaticiſm. Sectaries who lived under the toleration of our eſtabliſhed Church, were artfully ſtirred up to clamour againſt the extenſion of that toleration. The effects of bigotry and ſedition are too recent and palpable to need any relation. But what were the ſecret ſprings which firſt ſet them in motion, and what the ultimate objects which were aimed at, is not yet brought to light; they remain *altâ terrâ et caligine merſæ*. I ſhall not attempt prematurely, to develop the origin of theſe troubles; it is ſufficient for me to have been a witneſs to the dreadful inſurrection which took place, and which cloſed this boiſterous ſeſſions of Parliament with a ſcene of havock and confuſion,

which

which ſeemed likely, at one time, to have enſued from principles laid down in the opening of the Seſſions; but as Civil Diſcord failed to unbolt the gates of war, Fanaticiſm ſtepped forth and burſt them open.

Ardet inexcita Auſonia atque immobilis ante.

At once, the metropolis was on fire, and in arms; the legiſlature, the laws, and the faith of nations, were inſulted and trampled under foot; and, for a ſhort time, this capital exhibited a ſpecimen of the bleſſings of anarchy, and of the conſequences which flow from an appeal to the people at large.

To give any adequate account of the diſtraction into which this metropolis was thrown, exceeds my power of deſcription. The moſt opulent, populous, and flouriſhing city in the world, on fire in many quarters, and its inhabitants apprehenſive of a general conflagration and pillage; one while, under the dominion of a lawleſs rabble, then reſcued from their hands by the ſoldiery, and ſubjected to military command, muſt afford a ſcene ſo full of circumſtances worthy to be noticed, as to render it almoſt impoſſible for any man to fix his attention on one object alone. One object, however, there was of ſo curious a nature, as to deſerve regard and contemplation in the midſt of all our horrors. This was, the conduct and demeanour of the ſeveral political parties in the State.

State. That party ſhould have exiſted at all, while the common ſafety ſeemed to be immediately at ſtake, is ſurpriſing; but as it did exiſt, it is fortunate, that it broke forth in ſuch a manner, as to diſplay itſelf in all its deformity to the public view. It will be a uſeful leſſon to this and future ages; it will ſerve as a caution, to deter mankind from placing too much confidence in profeſſions of unanimity, amongſt thoſe who have been known to act upon irreconcilable principles. It will prevent the world from being lulled into a fatal ſecurity, by ſuppoſing, that, at all times, whenever through caprice they may grow tired of one ſyſtem of Government, or feel a diſpoſition to change hands in the direction of public affairs, there will be ready for their ſervice, a numerous, compact, united, and ſufficient body of men, to whom they may have recourſe, and on whoſe collective wiſdom they may depend.

True it is, that all parties, and all men of property or character, concurred in this, That the State ought, at all events, to be reſcued from the hands of a fanatic mob; but in what manner, and with what degree of energy and diſpatch it ought to be ſuppreſſed; whether any, and what ſort of diſcrimination ſhould be obſerved in diſperſing rioters, whoſe outrages had proceeded to ſuch a length; on theſe matters there were different opinions. The ſentiments

of parties, which, for ſome time, had joined in oppoſing the Adminiſtration, are ſuppoſed to have been very adverſe to each other, in regard to the policy and propriety of making any ſort of uſe of theſe tumults, or endeavouring to direct the ſtorm, and turn the torrent, towards any other object, though for the moſt beneficial purpoſes, ſuch as the reformation of public grievances, or the extirpation of bad miniſters. The moſt numerous and powerful party thought it more wiſe and juſt, to ſuſpend their hoſtilities againſt Adminiſtration; *motos præſtat componere fluctus*; nay, even to ſupport the Government with all their ſtrength, openly, firmly, ſincerely, without reſerve or limitation: they were reſolved to keep no terms, or management, with the mob; they were not for trifling with ſuch an ungovernable inſtrument. A fanatic inſurrection appeared to them to be an edged tool very dangerous to play with. They ſaw how little dependence was to be had on the conſiſtency of rioters in their attacks, and how liable they were to turn againſt their friends:

——even handed Juſtice
Returns th' ingredients of our poiſon'd chalice
To our own lips—

They therefore judged prudently, as well as honeſtly, that no encouragement was to be given to ſuch execrable proceedings; that they admitted of no palliation, and that the perpetrators of ſuch enormities deſerved no mercy,

and ſhould be fallen upon by the military *main baſſe*, wherever they aſſembled.

Theſe opinions are ſuppoſed to have been ſo diſcordant with thoſe of others, who were for keeping ſome meaſures with the populace, as to have produced a political ſchiſm, worthy to be recorded as one of the moſt remarkable effects of theſe diſorders:

—malè ſarta
Gratia nequicquam coit, et reſcinditur—

Such violent diſputes are ſaid to have ariſen in the allied army, that they could no longer hope to keep the field together. That parties united only for the purpoſe of hunting down a Miniſter, ſhould, when they have caught their game, fall out and quarrel for the bear-ſkin, is not to be wondered at; it is no more than the ordinary effect of hunger and rapacity; but that, during the chace, while the game is in view, and ſurrounded, entangled, and almoſt ready to become their prey, they ſhould, inſtead of ſeizing on it, fall together by the ears, and tear one another to pieces, is really a very extraordinary phenomenon. If famè ſpeaks truth, the exaſperation which took place in this inteſtine fray was exceſſive; deep and wide wounds were given, old ſores ripped open, and the rupture became incurable. From the contention and animoſity which had broke out between theſe par-

ties, peaceable men began to flatter themſelves with the hopes of extracting ſome advantage. When they ſaw that parties which had ſo lately *aſſociated*, could at once fall on one another with ſuch *acharnement*, they thought it as reaſonable to expect, that ſome of the moſt reſpectable opponents of Government might as ſuddenly lay aſide their enmity to it. A coalition ſeemed likely to take place; and the more ſo, becauſe the apparent motives of conciliation had no connection with, nor any relation, affinity, or ſimilitude to, the ſubject-matter of the differences and diſputes which had long been carried on between the oppoſite parties in politics. The novelty of the occurrence, and the horror and indignation which it excited, would have furniſhed a pretext for the junction of perſons, which, at any other time, might appear leſs intelligible to the public. For now it became manifeſt, that the monarchical part of our conſtitution was not uſeleſs; the power of the Crown was not now found ſo unneceſſary, or ſo great an evil, as it had been repreſented; the moderation and tenderneſs which were ſhown in the uſe of it, rendered it leſs unpopular; and the nation ſeemed to think, that the laws, the conſtitution, and the liberties of the country had been reſcued by the exertions of the King in Council. *Rempublicam Romani vitamque omnium veſtrûm, bona, fortunas, conjuges, liberoſque veſtros, atque hoc domicilium*

clariſſimi

clariſſimi imperii, fortunatiſſimam pulcherrimamque urbem, hodierno die, deorum immortalium ſummo erga vos amore, laboribuſque conciliiſque meis, ex flammâ atque ferro, ac pene ex faucibus fati, ereptam, et vobis conſervatam ac reſtitutam videtis.

And now, my Lord, permit me to conclude, by aſking your Lordſhip's pardon for treſpaſſing ſo long on your patience; for ſo doing, I have no other apology than this, That I think it the duty of every man to exert himſelf, however mean his abilities may be, in ſupport of this free government. This age has been a witneſs to your Lordſhip's exertions in the defence of the conſtitution; futurity will, with gratitude, commemorate the noble ſtand you have made againſt foreign enemies, revolted ſubjects, and domeſtic faction. When time ſhall have allayed the ferment of party, the cool diſpaſſionate page of Hiſtory ſhall tell, That in 1780 there was in England a Miniſter of noble birth, fair character, great learning and natural faculties, whoſe whole life had been ſpent in official parliamentary and political buſineſs: That experience in office had made him the moſt perfect maſter of finance in this country, or perhaps in this age: That practice in Parliament had rendered him the moſt expert debater in the Houſe, where his wit and learning had always made him one

of

of the moſt inſtructive and pleaſant members: That in politics he was unaſpiring, in Parliament never overbearing, in the Treaſury immaculate, unſuſpected (and, what was more extraordinary in thoſe times), unaccuſed: That the benevolent diſpoſition of his nature had made him ſlow in reſentment, eaſily placable, patient of unmerited aſperſions, inclined to moderation on all occaſions, and more free from perſonal enemies than any Miniſter who had ever been in office for the ſame length of time: That he had been called up to this high ſtation by his Sovereign, for eminent talents ſhewn, in maintaining at once the authority of Parliament, and the privileges of the people: That his advancement to that poſt was unſolicited, and his continuance in it no longer wiſhed for than whilſt it was for the ſervice of his King and country: That his whole adminiſtration had been during one continual ſtorm: That he was conſtantly either threatened with civil commotions, diſtracted by rebellion in the Provinces, or attacked by the ancient and inveterate foes of this country; and that in this particular year he had to ſtruggle againſt theſe united calamities: That in Parliament he was oppoſed by a very numerous party of the moſt able and experienced men of the age, againſt whom he maintained his ground with equal ability in debate, and often almoſt ſingly and unaſſiſted: That he never

declined

declined his ſhare of reſponſibility, or failed in giving due ſupport to his colleagues in office: That through the whole courſe of a ten years ſiege, both within and without the doors of Parliament, as a Miniſter and as a Man, he never betrayed one ſymptom of fear for himſelf, want of zeal for his maſter, or deſpair of the republic.

FINIS.

declined his ſhare of reſponſibility, or failed in giving due ſupport to his colleagues in office: That through the whole courſe of a ten years reign, both within and without the doors of Parliament, as a Miniſter and as a Man, he never betrayed one ſymptom of fear for himſelf, want of zeal for his maſter, or deſpair of the republic.

FINIS.